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USSR STILL NOT PRODUCING NITROUS OXIDE

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In 1936, Prof A.Ya. Lur'ye started the production of nitrous oxide at the Sverdlovsk Chemicopharmaceutical Factory. It was produced in liquid form. This gas was delivered to the Sverdlovsk Obstetrical and Gynecological Institute for experiments on animals. Much valuable data was thus obtained. Year by year the popularity of nitrous oxide increased, and finally in 1940 it was decided that the original N_2O plant had to be expanded to meet the larger demand; however, World War II came along and plans were temporarily shelved.

Three years have passed and there has been no attempt to increase the facilities for producing N_2O.

In March 1946, the Scientific Medical Council, Ministry of Public Health USSR, organized the Narcosis Commission under the leadership of Prof A.N. Bakulev. However, the Commission was reorganized after a very short existence, and the problem of gas anesthesia was delegated to a corresponding commission in the Technical Council of Ministers. The question of reviving the production of N_2O has not been discussed. There was some talk about the production of N_2O by a factory under the jurisdiction of some other Ministry, and actual operations were started, but the quality of the gas produced did not meet the standards established for medical purposes.

Apparatus installed at various hospitals and clinics also has to be modernized. At present, the majority of the hospitals have equipment suited only for prolonged narcosis required in surgical operations, and due to their complex construction can be operated only by anesthetists. There is a great need for simple N_2O anesthetic apparatus, and yet none is being manufactured. The commission in the Technical Council was given the duty of developing new apparatus. However, the plans submitted and the model built from them seemed more complicated than the apparatus now available.

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There is a great need for nitrous oxide, and hospitals and clinics would find good use for any gas which might be produced.

However, it also appears that a better system will have to be developed for the transportation of liquefied N_2O. There is no reason why it has to be shipped thousands of kilometers in bulky metal cylinders. It would be advantageous to have some of the chemicopharmaceutical factories in the Urals or at Kharkov or Rostov on the Don start production.

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